AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1-17. (canceled)

18. (currently amended) A ~~block~~ filter body, particularly for filtering particulates present in the exhaust gases of an internal combustion engine, comprising an assembly of blocks, at least one of said ~~block (11)~~ blocks comprising a plurality of flow channels for said exhaust gases ~~(14e,14s)~~, each of said channels ~~(14e,14s)~~ being bounded by a side wall ~~(22)~~, a plug ~~(15e,15s)~~ and an opening ~~(19e,19s)~~ terminating outwardly, wherein a first portion ~~(34)~~ of the side wall ~~(22)~~ of at least one of said channels ~~(14p,14p'')~~, called the "reinforced channel", comprises a reinforcement compared to the rest of said side wall ~~(22)~~ forming a second portion ~~(36)~~ of said side wall ~~(22)~~, the ratio ~~(R)~~ of the thickness of said first portion ~~(34)~~ to the thickness of said second portion ~~(36)~~, in a transverse plane of section ~~(P)~~, being between 1.1 and 3.

19. (currently amended) The ~~block~~ filter body as claimed in claim 18, which comprises a group of said adjacent reinforced channels ~~(14p',14p,14p'')~~ arranged so that said first portions of said reinforced channels form a continuous reinforcing partition ~~(30)~~.

20. (currently amended) The ~~block~~ filter body as claimed in claim 19, wherein said reinforced channels of said group ~~(14p',14p,14p'')~~ extend to the periphery of said block.

21. (currently amended) The ~~block~~ filter body as claimed in claim 18, wherein said first portion ~~(34)~~ comprises an external face in contact with the exterior of said block ~~(11)~~.

22. (currently amended) The ~~block~~ filter body as claimed in claim 19, wherein said reinforced channels of said group ~~(14p',14p,14p'')~~ are arranged so that said reinforcing partition ~~(30)~~ overlaps a longitudinal edge ~~(11')~~ of said filter block.

23. (currently amended) The ~~block~~ filter body as claimed in claim 19, wherein said group of reinforced channels ~~(14p',14p,14p'')~~ comprises all the peripheral channels of said block ~~(11)~~ so that said reinforcing partition ~~(30)~~ surrounds said block, preferably so that said reinforcing partition ~~(30)~~ is at the external surface ~~(16)~~ of said block ~~(11)~~.

24. (currently amended) The ~~block~~ filter body as claimed in claim 18, wherein said ratio ~~(R)~~ is constant irrespective of the transverse plane of section ~~(P)~~ considered.

25. (currently amended) The ~~block~~ filter body as claimed in claim 18, wherein said reinforcement is substantially constant in any longitudinal plane of section of said block.

26. (currently amended) The ~~block~~ filter body as claimed in claim 19, wherein said reinforcement is substantially constant for all the reinforced channels of said group in any transverse plane of section and/or in any longitudinal plane.

27. (currently amended) The filter ~~block~~ body as claimed in claim 18 wherein said ratio R is between 1.9 and 2.1, preferably is substantially equal to 2.

28. (canceled)

29. (previously presented) An extrusion die conformed to form, by extrusion of a ceramic material, a structure provided with channels suitable for the fabrication of a filter block as claimed in claim 18, said structure comprising said reinforcement.

30. (previously presented) A method for fabricating a block as claimed in claim 18, comprising the following successive steps:

a) extrusion of a ceramic material to form a porous honeycomb structure,

b) application of a reinforcement of a material, identical or different from said ceramic material, to at least part of the external surface of said porous structure, and

c) drying and sintering of said porous structure to obtain a filter block.

31. (previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 30, which further comprises a step for drying said porous structure between steps a) and b).

32. (previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 31, which further comprises a step for machining said dried porous structure obtained before step b).

33. (previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 32, wherein, in step b), said material reinforcement is applied at least to part of said external surface having been machined.

34. (currently amended) A method for fabricating a filter body ~~(3)~~ by assembling a plurality of filter blocks ~~(11a-11b)~~, wherein at least one of said filter blocks is fabricated by a method as claimed in claim 30.

35. (New) A filter body as claimed in claim 18, wherein said block presents the shape of a rectangular parallelepiped.

36. (New) A filter body as claimed in claim 18, wherein the assembled blocks have said reinforcement along their whole external surface.

37. (new) An extrusion die shaped so as to form, by extrusion of a ceramic material, a structure suitable for the

fabrication of one-piece filter block particularly for filtering particulates present in exhaust gases of an internal combustion engine, comprising an assembly of blocks, at least one of said blocks comprising a plurality of flow channels for said exhaust gases, each of said channels being bounded by a side wall, a plug and an opening terminating outwardly, wherein a first portion of the side wall of at least one of said channels, called “the reinforced channel”, comprises a reinforcement” compared to the rest of said sidewall forming a second portion of said side wall, a ratio of the thickness of said first portion to the thickness of said second portion, in a transverse plane of section, being between 1.1 and 3.